RAGGED SCHOOL UNION QUARTERLY RECORD.

APRIL, 1876.

JOSEPH PAYNE.

REMINISCENCES BY THE RT. HON. THE EARL OF SHAFTESBURY, K.G.

THOUGH there are many yet alive who can speak with knowledge and feeling of the various qualities of our friend Joseph Payne, there are few who can say so much as I can, in reference to that chief effort of his mind, and the deepest affection of his heart, the physical, social, moral, and religious welfare of the most forgotten and destitute children of the metropolis. The greater the degradation, the more forlorn their condition, the livelier seemed to be his energy on their behalf, which he manifested by ceaseless intellectual activity in the devotion of his rightful hours of repose, after the professional labours of the day, to humorous and appropriate speeches, to songs and "tail-pieces," as he called them, oftentimes effusions of singular merit; and, above all, to earnest and hearty prayer in the solitude of his home.

No one contributed more, perhaps none so much, to raise and maintain the public sympathy with the sorrows and sufferings of the ragged children. His various and pointed stories, by way of illustration, gave, in his singular power of narrative, wonderful life to the many meetings he attended; and every one was struck by the neat and dexterous faculty he possessed of bringing the most humorous of his anecdotes to an instructive and moral issue.

Doubtless his stories were often repeated. Nevertheless there was, at all times, a freshness about them; and he spoke, be it remembered, to several audiences in succession. As he and I were constantly on the same platform, we had a mutual understanding: I was to accept the reiteration of his stories, he the reiteration of my speeches. I made, I think, the better bargain; for, to the last, his stories interested myself and others, but I

cannot think that he could have said, certainly he could not have thought, the same of my speeches.

The tail-pieces, or verses with which he concluded every meeting, differed, of course, in excellence. A large proportion of them were framed while others were speaking, and they arose out of the circumstances of the evening. Some, composed with more premeditation, whether they took a playful or a serious turn, attained the rank of poetry and pathos.

I cannot doubt that, were a judicious selection given to the world, it would have a permanent value in marking the rise and fall of the Ragged Schools (a striking and singular movement in the religious history of this country), and, perhaps, somewhat rekindle the desire to save those wretched classes, now sinking fast, and unheeded, into their former oblivion.

Those who are assured that the affairs of men are ordered by a wise, considerate, and superintending Providence, will have no hesitation in believing that such a man as our friend was called to the work, and specially adapted for it. The conception itself of the Ragged Schools was from above. The aggressive movement on the repulsive and almost unknown classes, the principle on which it was founded, the end to which it was directed, and the spirit in which it was carried on, were all in harmony with its origin. Very little people, as the world would regard them, were enabled, by God's blessing, to do a great work, and for a time the "desert rejoiced, and blossomed as a rose;" but, like all other roses, it had its time of bud, of flower, and decay; and we are approaching the time when it will be finally gathered and put out of sight, as he was in Highgate Churchyard, amidst the tears and hymns of hundreds of those little things who, both for this life and for the next, had learned from him counsel, wisdom, and understanding.

Throughout his whole career in this labour of love his courage was ever undaunted, and his perseverance never at fault; he was "no respecter of persons," for whether he figured away on the platform of Exeter Hall, or in the lowest and darkest slums of Whitechapel, he always did his best; the roars of laughter from a number of the most wretched children, seemed to give him quite as much pleasure as any approval from a more refined audience; and he retired from the room, as few can ever say, with his desires accomplished and his ambition satisfied.

There are many proverbial sayings, such as "the hour and the man," "the man in the right place," and the like—all of them have a special applicability to our friend. The work was peculiar, and the man was so too; he pleased every one alike—committees, teachers, children, and audiences. Half the orators, and all the statesmen of England, would, as compared with him for such a duty, have been "fish out of water." He was just as Jonah's gourd: he was raised up for a purpose; he gave comfort and shelter while he lasted; and departed when his share of the work was done. That work was noble and Christian. It was to seek the temporal and eternal welfare of the outcasts of society, of the refuse of mankind. And here he surpassed all modern philosophers in his bold assertion that the intellectual part of man was subordinate to the spiritual; that education was in one aspect a farce, and in another a peril, when severed from religion; and that if you could give but little, that little should be of the "one thing needful." I can well imagine the mixture of terror and contempt with which he would have regarded the decrees of the School Board; and his astonishment also, when he had read the names of some of the functionaries by whom those decrees had been issued.

Sir R. Carden, however, in his letter to the *Times* on January 24th of this year, is far more hopeful, than many, of the final results, and he thinks that Parliament, when appealed to, will never approve such wholesale suppression of voluntary and beneficial effort. Parliament, he may be assured, will uphold its own Board. It may call on Sir C. Reed to do something in the way of inferior schools to meet, if possible, the exigencies of society. But such a step will be a creation of novelties, not a revival of extinct sympathies. Parliament, all-powerful with rates, taxes, numerous officials, and compulsory attendance, cannot recall the scattered teachers, restore the confidence of the wild and timid children, renew the combination of love and common sense, that grappled with, and overcame, unnumbered difficulties. Still less can it make the statutes and methods of official rule a substitute for fervent zeal and ingrained piety, that sought, and saw, in every thing, the work of Christ.

And supposing, for the sake of argument, that such an effort really formed a part of their deliberations, they would never, I am confident, find again for their purpose another such man as Joseph Payne.

JOSEPH PAYNE'S ADDRESSES AND POETRY.

In the foregoing paper Lord Shaftesbury has made reference to "the neat and dexterous faculty Joseph Payne possessed of bringing the most humorous of his anecdotes to an instructive and moral issue." For the benefit of our young readers, we give a fair sample of one of his speeches, which we well remember to have heard twenty-four years ago in Exeter Hall; and we give it fully believing that those who, with ourselves, can remember having heard it, will now read it with freshness, although an old tale twice told.

After a warm and enthusiastic reception, and the reading of the resolution he had to move, he began by saying:—

My Lords, Ladies and Gentlemen,—At our last anniversary, I gave a kind of farewell of these meetings, intending not to appear again, at all events not for some time; you will therefore be surprised at my reappearance on this occasion. In my address to you, therefore,

1. I shall offer an apology, and
2. I shall utter a doxology; then
a. I shall stand at a station,
b. I shall take an observation,
c. I shall confer a decoration, and
d. I shall ask for a donation.

1. My apology. It is due to you, and I will give it after my own fashion.

Here I am reminded of a story that is told of two Irishmen, who went together into a battle. One called to the other, and said, "Holloa, Pat, I've taken a prisoner." Then said the other, "Bring him along with you." "I can't," said he. "Then come along without him." "He won't let me," said he. (Laughter.) The fact was, instead of the man's having taken the other prisoner, he was taken prisoner himself. Now that is the case with me. I cannot make the Society go my way, and the Society will not let me go my own way; therefore I must remain with the Society, and I am no unwilling captive to the power and the importance of its claims. (Cheers.)

2. My doxology:—

I am glad and thankful for two things; one that we have new friends, and the other that we do not lose our old ones. I am glad we enrol among our number the Mayor of Plymouth, who has given in his adhesion to the Society in a speech which does equal honour to his head and to his heart.*

* A. Rooker, Esq., the Mayor of Plymouth, was a speaker at the same meeting with Mr. Payne.

I am glad, I say, that we retain old friends, and that we are fighting under the same leader, who, though he has changed his name, has not changed his spirit. (Loud cheering.) At the last meeting the chair was announced to be taken by the Right Hon. Lord Ashley, M.P.; although he is now in the House of Peers, I think he is still entitled to keep the letters M.P. at the end of his name, for these reasons:

His *M*anner is *P*leasing;
His *M*ethod is *P*opular;
His *M*ind is *P*ious;
His *M*erits are *P*atent; and, lastly,
He is a *M*odel *P*eer.

The meeting endorsed this doxology by most demonstrative cheering.

a. I shall now stand at a station:—

You have all travelled by railways, and you know when the steam is up and the train is in motion, an individual stands at a part of the line with his arm extended; he has nothing to do with the machinery, but he merely stands at a certain spot, to give a signal that the train may go forward. That is my position to-night. My Lord Shaftesbury, my friend Dr. Beaumont, and others, have been getting the steam up, and the train is going along gloriously. I have only to stand here, and stretch out my arm, and say, "Forward! Forward!" (Cheers.) Forward, for the love of England; forward, for the love of sinners; forward, for the love of self; forward, for the love of God. Let this train, the Ragged School movement, with its multitudes of immortal passengers, go gloriously on its way through the cuttings of patience, under the tunnels of perseverance, over the bridges of faith, along the viaducts of hope, safe to that celestial terminus where the gates are of gold, and which "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive." (Loud applause.)

b. I shall take an observation:—

You know there is a great deal of difference between
Making an Observation, and
Taking an Observation.

Taking an observation is a nautical process, in which you use a particular instrument. Now, in the observation I take I see four things.

I see Incongruity,
Assiduity,
Ingenuity, and
Perpetuity.

I see Incongruity:—

There is an *incongruity* between the education we are striving to give the lower classes, and the filth of the houses in which those lower classes are compelled to dwell. You know the story of the Augean stable. Nobody could clean it, till Hercules turned the course of a river through it, and thus swept away the filth. Now the noble lord in the chair is the modern Hercules, and he is turning the river of the Ragged School movement, the river of truth, the river of the water of life, through this Augean stable.

I see Assiduity:—

There is a great spirit of diligence to be found in our Ragged Schools. The boys are diligent and the girls are diligent; and we have every day specimens of this diligence brought before us.

I see Ingenuity:—

I heard an instance of it the other day which delighted me. A boy named Denis Murphy had a hole in his trowsers, and he could not afford to pay a tailor to mend it, so he set to work to do it himself. But he could not buy the needles and thread, and he thought to himself of a shop where needles were sold, and he went early one morning to see if any were swept out into the street amongst the dust. He picked up two needles there; but then he wanted some thread. He knew an old woman who sold thread, and he went and took one of the needles to her, and offered it for a needleful of thread. The exchange was made, and having obtained what he required, he mended his trowsers. Now, was not that ingenuity? And did not that lad deserve to be supported?

I see Perpetuity:—

Our case is not the case of a day, of a week, of a month, or of a year; it will last a long time. There is perpetuity also in the higher and better world. A converted heathen, you know, was asked, "What is religion?" and he put one hand upon his heart, and pointed with the other to the sky, and said, "Something good is here—something better up there." That is what we aim to teach these children. We want to give something good in the heart, and something better in the heaven above.

c. I shall confer a decoration:—

It is a modern one; we heard a good deal of it in connection with the Exhibition,* and it is expressed by the letters C.B., which you know denote *Companion* of the *Bath*, but I think they

* This was the first of all the great Exhibitions held in Hyde Park, in the year 1851, to which 1,223 boys and girls from Ragged Schools were admitted through the kindness of Lord Shaftesbury and other friends.

also denote a Ragged School teacher, and for these reasons:—They *C*atch the *B*ad—they *C*lothe the *B*are—they *C*omfort the *B*ereaved—they *C*ount them *B*rethren—they *C*arry them *B*ibles—they *C*leanse their *B*odies—they *C*ultivate their *B*rains—they *C*ontrol them *B*landly—they *C*ontribute to them *B*ountifully—they *C*onvey them *B*enignantly—and, in return, they are *C*onsidered *B*enevolent, and they are *C*alled *B*enefactors. (Cheers.)

d. I now ask for a donation:—

The collection has already been made, but we shall be most thankful to receive from those who are able to give it still larger sums of money; and I would press upon the rich the necessity of supporting this Society. The evil is at their own doors, and they must sweep it away, or they will themselves suffer.

Mr. Payne always ended a speech of this kind with what he called THE TAIL-PIECE, which was often impromptu, composed while the previous speakers were engaging the attention of the audience. On the occasion of the foregoing address, the tail-piece was:—

Shout for the Ragged School *movement*, shout,
The pride of our Christian land;
The scholars are scattered the earth about,
In many a joyful band.

Once they were found in the stifling court,
Where the stagnant waters lay;
They could not engage in a healthful sport,
So they gambled the hours away.

But now they are walking on sunny plains,
And breathing the balmy air;
And cheerfully singing in grateful strains,
The praise of their Maker there.

Shout for the Ragged School *Union*, shout,
The blessing of heaven descends;
Its enemies march to the right about,
And victory crowns its friends.

Shout for the Ragged School *Leader*, shout,
The noble in heart and name;
Who oft, in the time of dismay and doubt,
With strength to the rescue came.

And when he has finished his warfare here,
And rests from his mortal strife;
May the coronet worn as an earthly peer
Be changed for "the Crown of life."

Shout for the Ragged School *Teachers*, shout,
The zealous, the tried, the true;
May their heads be clear and their hearts be stout,
And their prayers not faint nor few!

And oh! may their rich reward be this,
When the heavenly land they win;
To see in the realms of eternal bliss,
The children they snatched from sin!

Then shout for the Ragged School movement, shout,
Let cheers be denied by none:
May the fire of its energy ne'er go out,
Till the work of its heart is done.

For the long period of twenty-five years no Ragged School meeting was considered complete if Mr. Payne were absent; and the fact that his famous "tail-pieces"—not rarely composed on the platform—

exceeded 2,400, will show how untiringly he had been at work (to use his own expression) as "the bard of the poor." Many of these tail-pieces have been reprinted in America, and are very popular there. In fact, on one occasion, an American minister quoted his famous poem—"Gather them in"—in Mr. Payne's presence, at Exeter Hall, without knowing that the author was present.

It now only remains to give specimens of his more carefully prepared stanzas :—

1. "Three Views through Time's Telescope."
2. "Two Views; or, the Ragged School Diorama."

THREE VIEWS THROUGH TIME'S TELESCOPE.

PAST—PRESENT—FUTURE.

To be taken on New Year's Day.

I.

Dweller in this favour'd clime,
Take the telescope of Time;
Look, with fix'd and anxious eye,
On the scenes that round thee lie.
See the swarms of ragged youth
Never taught the words of truth;
Pallid cheeks and matted hair,
Show the lack of food and care:
Shivering limbs, and shoeless feet
Pattering o'er the stony street:—
Timid forms, in arches damp;
Shrinking from the dreaded lamp
Of policeman passing on;
Trembling till his tread is gone:—
None regarded, none relieved,
None to school or home receiv'd!—
Cease thy gaze; for numbers vast
'Tis a picture of THE PAST!

II.

Look again!—What seest thou now?
Many a smooth and cheerful brow;
Many a form no longer weak;
Many a bright and blooming cheek.
Some are, with a heart sincere,
Filling useful stations here;
Some are sailing o'er the wave,
With a spirit bold and brave:
Some are singing joyful strains,
Tending sheep on sunny plains;
Feeling neither cold nor care,
Breathing pure and fresh'ning air:
Hark! they bless, from day to day,
Christian people far away;
Who the Ragged Union plann'd,
In their own, their native land;
Uttering many an earnest prayer
For its Head and Members there;
Men whom England loves to view,
ASHLEY, and his helpers true!
Pause awhile, in thought sublime,
'Tis for crowds THE PRESENT TIME!

III.

Look again—and upward raise
Each regard, in sweet amaze:
Point thy telescope on high:
Search beyond the starry sky.—
There, beside the healing tree,
Numbers without number see:
Once they were of meanest birth,
Scorn'd and scouted on the earth;
Once they lurk'd in dark abodes;
Once they ran in downward roads;
Now the golden streets are trod—
They are "kings and priests to God."

Now the golden harps are strung—
Now the heavenly song is sung;
"Glory, honour, praise, and power,"
Are the strains of every hour.
Thus, through all eternity,
Shall the glorious FUTURE be!

Christian patriot, gaze no more,
Need for gazing now is o'er;
Much is yet to be achiev'd—
Much of woe to be reliev'd:—
'Gainst the coming of that day,
Watch and work, and give and pray.

TWO VIEWS; OR, THE RAGGED SCHOOL DIORAMA.

VIEW I.—DARKNESS.

Say, who are these, so wretched, wan, and pale—
Half-cloth'd, half-fed—whose tongues are heard to rail:
Whose features vainly we essay to trace,
Through hair *around*, and dirt *upon*, the face?
These are a set of England's ragged youth;
England, who boasts her love of gospel truth,
Which bids us feed the hungry, cheer the sad,
Instruct the ignorant, and reform the bad:—
England, who spends her boasted wealth's increase
On Courts and Judges, Prisons and Police;
Yet own'd not one asylum for the poor,
Where *wise prevention* takes the place of *cure!*
See how these children rush to vice and crime:
Some spend in begging half their daily time;
Some, taught to lie and steal, with art and skill,
Their wretched hands and ragged pockets fill;
Then haste away to fetid lanes and courts,
By stagnant pools, where infant misery sports,
And seek their home, scarce better than a sty,
Where drunken parents wild and wallowing lie!
The heart grows sick; too sad the sight has been;
Change we the picture, and reverse the scene.

VIEW II.—LIGHT.

Say, who are these, who fill the scholar's seat,
Though badly cloth'd and fed, yet clean and neat;
Whose smiling features we with ease can trace—
Thanks to the well-comb'd hair and well-washed face!
And whose young voices, taught to read God's word,
In hymns of praise to heaven are often heard?
These are the self-same Ragged ones ye saw
Disdaining danger and defying law;
Their busy feet to honest haunts have run,
Their busy fingers honest work have done;

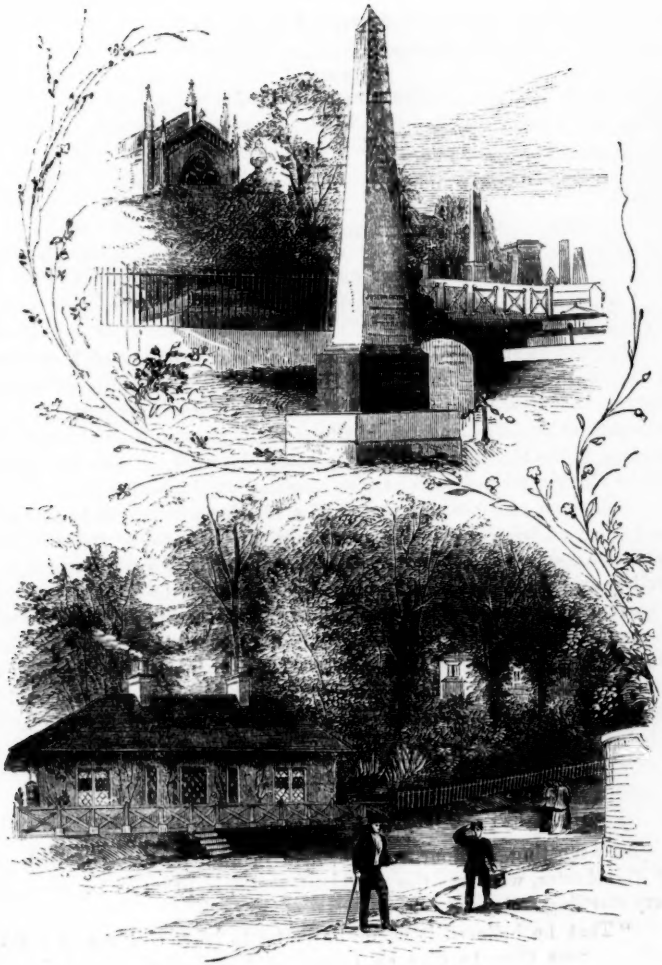
The begging trade, so highly priz'd, is o'er,
And he who stole has learned to steal no more:—
The parents on the child's improvement gaze,
Admire and wonder and amend their ways!

And ask ye what has wrought this change of state,
This wondrous change of scene?—I answer straight:
Firmness and kindness, patience and true love,
By Him inspir'd who reigns in heaven above:
Who, when on earth, with woes and cares oppress'd,
Young children took into His arms and blessed.
The scene is pleasing, and the thought sublime,
That some are sav'd from wretchedness and crime;
Yet this is but a small and scanty band,
One *green spot* in the *desert* of our land.

Christians of England! if your land ye love,
This one thing seek all other things above—
To teach the young, and thus for good exchange
The men and women of the coming age.
Would ye have Christian virtue's high reward,
In unity at home, and peace abroad;
Strive that the thousands of neglected youth
Who crowd our streets, may learn the way of truth.
A few have much achiev'd, but they require
Aid from *the many*—grant them their desire:
If useful lives and happy death ye prize,
Behold their deeds, and "GO AND DO LIKEWISE."

JOSEPH PAYNE'S COTTAGE AND TOMB.

In this number we not only give a steel-plate portrait of our late friend Joseph Payne, but a full-page illustration of his home and tomb. *The Home* was a small cottage on West Hill, Highgate, standing on the grounds belonging to the residence of the late Sir W. H. Bodkin, Assistant-Judge of the Middlesex Sessions. Though small, it was very cosy, and gave sufficient accommodation for himself and housekeeper. *The Tomb* is in Highgate Cemetery. Over it is the monument, as shown in our engraving. It consists of a simple obelisk, the needle of which is one stone of white Sicilian marble, resting on a die of polished Aberdeen or red granite. This stands on



a plinth of grey granite, the whole standing rather more than sixteen feet in height. The inscription upon it is:—

JOSEPH PAYNE,
DEPUTY-ASSISTANT-JUDGE;
BORN,
NOVEMBER 13, 1797;
DIED,
MARCH 29, 1870.

"THE MEMORY OF THE JUST IS BLESSED."

ERECTED TO HIS MEMORY
BY
THE FRIENDS OF RAGGED SCHOOLS
AND
TEMPERANCE SOCIETIES.

The monument may be easily found. It stands on the high ground a little to the west of the back of Highgate Church; and, itself being lofty, it is conspicuous; or it may also be easily found by entering the cemetery at Swain's Lane, turning to the left, passing the chapel, then turning to the right, and continuing along the walk till near the back of the church, when it will be seen standing on the higher level.

Where so suitable and so sacred a site for a memorial to a loved and departed friend as the spot where lie all that was mortal of him to whose memory it has been erected? If we beautify some prized or well-known open space with an effigy or column to the memory of departed goodness or greatness, that memorial is but subordinate to the embellishment of that particular locality; there is little or no association of thought or feeling elicited by a memorial so placed, as compared with that which indicates the spot where rest the earthly remains of him whose memory is so precious, because his life and labours had been so valuable.

BIBLE-TEACHING IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

AT a meeting in Bournemouth, held in January last, the Bishop of Winchester, who was the president, made, if properly reported, a very startling statement, viz.:—

> "That he believed it would be better to leave children in darkness than to give an education that had not the light of heaven in it. He would rather have his own children educated by a pious Roman Catholic, or Nonconformist, than that they should receive a secular education pure and simple."

The idea that seemed to rest upon the Bishop's mind, figuratively, was that the State had built, rigged, and manned at great cost, and with considerable skill, a first-class sea-going vessel, but had sent it upon the wild waves without a chart or compass, and, consequently, a catastrophe was not only to be expected, but considered inevitable. It would, therefore, be safer to embark in a vessel of less substantial build, and manned by a less pretentious crew, using honestly chart and compass with what light and ability they possessed. The probabilites of safely reaching the desired haven were all in favour of the second-rate barque.

Figures apart, the Education Act was the result of great pains, anxiety, and skill. The Boards called into existence by it have already spent millions in giving effect to its provisions, and yet the scheme is deficient of the main subject of successful teaching—deficient of the "one thing needful" to lead to the people's best interest, and the nation's greatest welfare. The "missing link" is the "Bible text and the knowledge of the unchanging truth in the text."

The number of children gathered, by fair means or foul, into the Board Schools, is yearly increasing, and we may, or ought to, expect fair returns for the labour bestowed, and the capital sunk. We would not be unfair in our expectations, or inconsistent in our demands as to the character of those returns. From thorns we would not expect grapes, or from thistles figs. Such an expectation would be beneath common sense. The irrevocable fiat has gone forth, "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he reap." Our Education Act settles the question that the public elementary school shall give a secular education, and we ought to expect nothing more. The decisions of the Boards give pretty full proof that that education shall be, or rather ought to be, from the amount of their expenditure, of a high order. We may therefore expect their scholars to become clear-witted, clever men of the world. Doubtless England was in need of a little more of this than she possessed to keep her artisans and traders abreast of those of other nations. Brain-culture alone, however, never placed England foremost amongst nations. That enviable position has been gained more by heart-culture than head-culture, at least by the happy blending of the two; but, now, it is decreed to develop the intellect, for this is imperative; but the moral and religious sensibilities may lie dormant, for this is permissive. In such a scheme there seems to us a fearful omission for the right and effective training of England's children. Our figurative vessel is not only without chart or compass, but its safety further endangered by having its freight all on one side. Not only the head but the heart needs cultivation, and the latter is more urgent than the former. Here is the weakness, the

great defect, of our Education Act; for while it makes every imperative preparation for the presence of the primer and the grammar, it strangely provides for the exclusion of the Bible, if the local authorities should so decide; and this, forsooth, to meet what is thought to be "a religious difficulty," while all conversant with education know it to be no difficulty at all, except for party purposes in Parliamentary or School Board debates, or in the argument of hot partisans of the Birmingham League or National Society. Poll the parents of the country, and we hesitate not to say, that 99 of every 100, or rather 999 of every 1,000, would vote for their children being made acquainted with the Book of books in the public elementary schools of the country. That the children in these schools should be taught the Bible as well as the grammar was forcibly argued lately by Mrs. W. Gray. She first asked *whether Bible teaching should form a part of the school course in rate-paid or other undenominational schools*, then answered her own question in the *affirmative*. She then proceeded to point out the religious element in human nature, its power, its essence, and the necessity of training it; and then added that "the school which left untouched this powerful element of our nature must forfeit its right to be regarded as a place of education. It was often urged that Day Schools, in which the pupils only spent a few hours, might well be secular, because moral and religious education could be dealt with at home. What, however, the pupils of Elementary Schools did not learn at school, they would not learn at all during the school age. The hard-worked parents of the artisan and labouring classes had not the time, even if they were otherwise qualified, to supply the omissions of the school. The curse of ignorance was great, but the curse of intelligence divorced from moral goodness might prove greater still. In reply to the objection that it was not morality but religion which was excluded, and that morality was even more carefully taught in a purely secular school, she pointed out the essential difference of the motives appealed to by these two schools of morals. It was the recognition of the social power of the element of religious faith in human nature to bring men under a law which made Voltaire exclaim:—'*Si Dieu n'existait pas il faudrait l'inventer.*' The keen intellect of the great French sceptic saw that civilisation rested upon obedience and law. Exactly contrary was the expression of the French Communist, who aimed at destroying civilisation through lawlessness, and who said, '*Si'l y avait un Dieu il faudrait le fusiller.*'" Mrs. Grey went on to say that "the reading of the Holy Scriptures must be the basis of all religious instruction in this country. The method of teaching naturally fell under two heads—knowledge of the text of the Bible and knowledge of the unchanging truth enshrined in the text.

Where the text of the Bible was in manifest collision with the established truths of science, it was better for the teacher to state at once that the Bible was not intended to teach science, or, in the words of Baronius, the ecclesiastical historian of the Church of Rome, 'the intention of Holy Scripture is to show us how to go to heaven, not to show us how the heaven goeth.' In proportion to the earnestness of the teachers would be the honesty with which, having once accepted office in an undenominational school, they would carry out the principles of such a school, and refrain from imposing their own convictions as necessary truths on the minds of their pupils. Having described the manner of teaching the subject matter of the Bible, the lecturer next approached the teaching of the eternal truths embodied in the Scriptures. The central truths of the Old as compared with the New Testament were indicated, and the duty of the teacher and the lessons he would deduce were insisted on. These were the general principles upon which religious instruction and religious education might be given without touching on any sectarian differences, and by which, in spite of those differences, the spiritual life, which alone could save it from decay, might be preserved to the nation. It might be said that such instruction would require so high a level of intelligence, knowledge, and personal religious fervour in the teacher that it would be vain to attempt to make it general. This objection, however, would be equally valid against a high standard of teaching in any other branch of education, and no policy could be more fatal to progress than lowering our standard to the supposed level of the teachers. Let every effort, on the contrary, be made to 'level up' and raise the teachers to the mark of the standard. Some would reach it; some had reached it already. The rest would strive towards it, and the result would be a much higher general level than could otherwise be obtained. We should also, by this means, attain to a much higher level of religious life. The instruction as given would lay a foundation of religious thought and feeling, deep and broad and strong, in the hearts and minds of the pupils trained in our undenominational schools."

Our Education Act is not in accord with sentiments so manifestly right as those expressed by Mrs. Grey. It is not only in discord with them, but it actually provides for a do-nothing policy, with regard to Bible teaching in any or all the Public Elementary Schools of the country. We have had nearly six long years' experience in the working of this defective Act, and the time, it is hoped, has now arrived when Parliament will reconsider and amend it by requiring the Bible to be taught in all these schools side by side with the primer and the grammar. When the Act was passed, its authors and pro-

moters did not consider it a perfect measure. They thought it sufficiently complete to give it a tentative trial; and, during the time of trial, gather the experience, and, when the subject was ripe, amend the Act and make it acceptable to a Christian nation. In its present form it is unacceptable, for the unmistakable decision of the great majority of the nation is that *education apart from the direct and systematic Bible-teaching is incomplete and defective.*

It will be said by advocates of School Boards that religious teaching is not neglected in undenominational schools. Granted, that in some of the schools it is so, but under what conditions? That it is permitted, that it is not at all essential, and that, if permitted, it shall in no case be a subject for examination by her Majesty's inspector. The teachers and the taught thus imbibe the idea that such knowledge is not a necessary branch of education, that they get nothing for teaching it, and the time devoted to it, if given to other subjects, would prove a source of credit and income to them.

The inducements, therefore, to keep the Bible out of the schools, and to curtail its teaching to the utmost where permitted to be read, are strong; and unless soon corrected, the results will, ere long, become manifest in the opening of our museums, aquariums, picture-galleries, and theatres on the Lord's day. Sunday will become the selected day for our elections, reviews, races, and manœuvres. The day of rest will thus become a day of toil. The Sabbath in London and England will be similar to the Sabbath in Paris and France. Instead of a law-abiding people, desirous of rule and order, will be a populace skilled in barricades and revolutions.

The *Globe*, in touching on this subject, says: "These defects of the present system have become so patent that parents complain bitterly of being forced to send their children to schools where religious education is merely a name. The present Parliamentary session should not be allowed to pass without some determined effort at improving the existing state of things. Such attempts at reform will, no doubt, meet with vehement opposition from the secularists, who, if they had their way, would willingly leave spiritual knowledge to the chapter of accidents. This, fortunately, is no longer possible; the growing feeling of the community being that such instruction ought to form a leading feature of every really national system of education. The option now allowed to School Boards of sanctioning or forbidding religious instruction, ought not to be maintained in the teeth of public opinion. It does harm to the Boards themselves, by narrowing the issues at every election to a single point; it damages the schools, by destroying the continuity of instruction; and it vitally injures the children, by its practical teaching that the acquisition of religious

knowledge is of slight importance. Anything in the shape of denominational teaching must be, of course, as strictly forbidden as under existing regulations. Parents must also enjoy the right of deciding whether their children should acquire the leading principles of Christianity as a part of education. So far, there need not be any departure from the present system. The only difference in it is that religion would have to be taught in every National School, instead of being liable to rejection by secularist majorities of School Boards. In addition, there is the subsidiary but difficult question how best to incorporate religious instruction with the ordinary curriculum without, on the one hand, giving offence to a certain class of parents, and, on the other, without bringing religion into contempt among pupils, as under the present arrangements. Some way out of this dilemma will no doubt be found, far greater difficulties having already been surmounted. The matter may therefore be allowed to rest until that far more vital question, the universality of religious instruction in all National Schools, has been definitely settled. As this proposal will be certain to encounter determined opposition, those interested in its success ought to lose no time in marshalling their ranks. So far as numerical strength goes, the Secularist party are not very important; but they are active, resolute, skilled in the art of agitation, and of one mind in carrying out their purpose of abolishing religious teaching in National Schools. We would, therefore, earnestly impress upon the advocates of such education the expediency of uniting to uphold their principles against all opposition."

On this all-important subject an emphatic voice reaches us through the English chaplain in Switzerland. His letter and its enclosure are as follow :—

"Sir,—The enclosed article on the subject of 'Government and Education,' taken from an American newspaper, the *New York Observer*, may be interesting to your readers at the present time from its bearing on the subject of religious education. It puts the matter in so plain a manner that I venture to enclose it, in case you should think the whole or part of it worthy of insertion.

"I am, &c.,

"J. Green, M.A., English Chaplain, Clarens, Switzerland.

"Feb. 8, 1876."

The following is the article referred to :—

"Government is of God. This is as clearly the principle of the Declaration of Independence as it is of the Bible.

"The form of government may be determined by men, but government, the majesty of law and the duty of obedience, are of Divine origin and authority.

"Government's first duty to its children is to teach them that idea: 'to obey the Government is to obey God.' The limits of this doctrine are easily defined, but the principle is what we are after now.

"There is no public or private conscience, except as it is under the dominion of this idea that God is, and requires man to obey. The first lesson, the most important lesson, in all schools of instruction is this—that it is wrong to disobey.

"Therefore, morality based alone on the revealed will of God is the essential thing to be taught by the Government, if it undertakes to train children to be citizens. The life of the Government depends on it. Self-preservation requires it.

"Where there is no conscience there can be no self-government, or government by people who choose their own rulers.

"There can be no conscience where there is no knowledge of what is right or wrong.

"Therefore it is the duty of the Government to see to it that all her children are educated into this knowledge.

"Remove the Bible, as the only light to the conscience, from the school, and the whole superstructure of its sanctions falls. The youth about to be a citizen may not be taught that it is *wrong* to tell a lie, to steal, to swear, to rebel against his parents and against the State. He is instructed by the State, at its expense, that he may be a good citizen; and yet, by the exclusion of the Bible, it is logically impossible to teach him the first and fundamental elements of good citizenship.

"No man can say whence the State gets the right to tax me for the instruction of my neighbours' children in music, French, and zoology; but every good man sees whence the State gets the right, and why it is its duty, to teach in all its schools a morality which has its foundation only in the Bible, and is unknown where the Bible is not found."

"YE HAVE DONE IT UNTO ME."

BY THE REV. ROBERT MAGUIRE.

"FATHER," said Karl, "we ask each day—
'Lord Jesus, come and be our guest;
This food be pleased to bless,' we say;
'And be Thou present at our feast.'

"And yet the Saviour doth not come,
Although we bid Him every day;
Though oft invited to our home,
He never comes at all this way!"

"Be still, my child, believe His Word;
Ask on, and wait, and be content;
He doth not scorn our humble board,
Nor yet the message we have sent."

"Well then," said Karl, "this chair I place
For our Lord Jesus, as our guest;
Perhaps this very day He'll grace
Our humble home and frugal feast."

* * * *

That very eve, 'mid ice and snow,
(The night was dark, the hour was late,)
A stranger stood, in want and woe,
And weariness, before the gate.

The stranger knocked; the opened door
Gave light, and welcome, warmth of home;
He was unknown, for none before
Had seen him go, or seen him come.

The children all throng round to see,
And Karl looks on with wond'ring eyes:
It surely, surely cannot be
His dear Lord Jesus in disguise!

Each takes his place; on every side
The question then arises, "Where
Shall we a place for him provide?"
And each responds, "The vacant chair!"

"Ah, now I see," the orphan said,
"My Lord could not Himself come down;
So He has sent this lad instead,
To occupy His vacant throne!"

* * * *

Yes, "hungry, and ye gave Me food;
Athirst, and ye refreshed My soul;
A stranger, and ye did Me good;
And sick, and ye did make Me whole!"

In every child of want, each one
A proxy for his Lord may see;
"What to the least of these is done,"
Saith my dear Lord, "*is done to Me!*"

BOOKS, AND WHAT IS THOUGHT OF THEM.

SEED TIME AND FRUIT, OR YOUNG PEOPLE WHO HAVE BECOME FAMOUS. *Religious Tract Society.*

This excellent little book contains an epitome of the life and doings of eight famous people,—four men and four women—viz., Lady Jane Grey—Renée, Duchess of Ferrara, daughter of Louis XII. of France—Katherine von Bora, Luther's wife—and Maria de Bohorques, the Protestant Martyr of Seville. Of the other sex we have Dr. Kitto, Dr. Livingstone, Sir Henry Havelock, and James Watt. This volume is most instructive, and needs only to be known to be popular in every juvenile library in the country.

LISA BAILLIE'S JOURNAL. *Religious Tract Society.*

A girl's book, full of useful lessons given in narrative form, and teaching sound principles in the discharge of duties of every-day life, especially that hard lesson, "in whatsoever state God puts us, therewith to be content." Poor little Lisa found it hard work to discover whether God had given her even one talent, and when she found He had, her difficulties seemed to be increased to find out how to use it. But so apt a scholar did she become, especially in the school of affliction, that the last entry she wrote in her journal was, "I am quite sure of one thing, and that is, that there can never be real true content without the peace of God in the heart. Because, without that, there must always be a longing and wishing for something better; but when there is that, it just makes up for everything else that is wanting."

THE PILGRIM'S PROGRESS. By John Bunyan. *Religious Tract Society.*

No book save "The Book of Books," has been translated into more languages, and appeared in greater variety of editions, than this ever fresh and inimitable dream of the Elstow tinker. The edition before us is peculiar as to type, which is large and bold, and therefore easily read by weak eyes and aged persons. Great pains have evidently been taken to make this edition as correct a reprint of the original work as possible. The side-notes of the original edition will be found here, and with no small advantage to the reader. At the foot of the pages will be found the Scripture texts quoted in the work. In addition to which the work is enriched by sixteen full-page plates illustrative of the painful incidents in the Progress made by Christian and Christiana. It is gratifying to find the author's own apology for his book here retained unabridged, with a good memoir of John Bunyan.

MABEL'S FAITH. Toned paper, illustrated. *Religious Tract Society.*

We read this book through at one sitting, and were charmed and refreshed by it. Its story is told with much feeling, we may say even with pathos, and always with a high-toned principle, and a simple but firm trust in the providential teaching of a gracious God. At the end of a month, in a leisure hour, we picked up the book again and gave it a second reading, when its tales, its incidents, and its lessons, came with a freshness and

power that justifies us in recommending it to the notice of librarians of our Sunday School Lending Libraries. It would be a useful book to give as a present to young people of both sexes.

THE LOST FOUND; OR, BRUNHILD'S TRIALS. *Religious Tract Society.*

A very touching tale of a sickly orphan girl, mentally weak, but of strong uncultured affections. The point of the story is to show the power of temptation over such a person, and how deliverance both of body and spirit is effected, instrumentally, by a young Christian lady.

The sowing of the seeds of Bible truth, and their slow but certain development in a soil needing great patience, skill, and attention, are clearly set forth. The book grows in interest as the tale unfolds.

"SEEKING THE LOST." *Nisbet and Co.*

The title aptly expresses the aim of this interesting volume from the graphic pen of Mr. Whitmore. It comprises a number of separate papers descriptive of efforts to socialise and Christianise the Godless, the drunken, the profligate, the sceptical, and the wretched poor of London, amongst whom, for a long period, the author has been successfully labouring.

The various scenes and incidents are strikingly portrayed, and picture after picture is represented vivid enough to arrest the attention of the most disinterested reader.

The book deserves a wide circulation, and we would, if possible, bespeak for it the thoughtful perusal of every Christian philanthropist, and indeed of all who are interested in the problems to be solved in dealing with the misery of vast and varied London.

We have, by permission, transcribed the sketch of "A Waif" for the behoof of our readers, at page 62.

D. L. MOODY AND HIS WORK. *Hodder and Stoughton.*

Every one has been asking who and what manner of man is this whose name has been associated with a wonderful revival of religion in America and in the British Isles.

Mr. Daniels answers the question in an entertaining and straightforward way.

The record of Mr. Moody's life proves that God does not use men for extraordinary purposes without first fitting them, as He did of old, by a process of training and instruction.

Commencing with his boyhood in the west, we have his confidence, his daring, and other boyish characteristics, graphically depicted. His subsequent career at the Shoe Stores, the North Street Mission, and the Chicago Young Men's Christian Association, is also recounted, and the whole is full of romantic interest.

A brief sketch is added of Mr. Sankey's antecedents, and a full and apparently faithful history of their first efforts in England, Ireland, and Scotland.

We heartily commend this book, which is embellished with two photographs and some engravings. We notice almost regretfully that

Mr. Moody's family are not to participate in the benefit arising from the work. Was it a conscientious scruple on this point which prompted the author to devote a part of the profits to the Young Men's Christian Association?

A WAIF.*

"Lift up thy hands toward Him for the life of thy young children."

In a long narrow back street leading out of Shoreditch, stands a two-storied building, in which some years ago I had my first introduction to Ragged School work. A friend had invited me to spend a Sunday evening with him in this place, and not having seen anything of the work at that time, I very cheerfully accepted his invitation. On reaching the place, I saw a man who was lame walking up and down, keeping guard over the front of the house, with a stick that might well be called a bludgeon in his hand. On every side of him was gathered a number of ragged boys, who were occupied in endeavouring to pull his coat and knock off his hat, and in evading the blows of the bludgeon that were aimed at them in return. Both parties were cool and cheerful, as though employed in ordinary avocations of a commendable character, although it appeared to me that if some of the blows had taken effect, they would have made cases for the hospital. I made known my wish for admittance to the lame man, who knocked at the panel over the door three times in rapid succession with the bludgeon. Bell or knocker there was none, and knocks on the door were unnoticed. The door was opened by my friend himself, who gave me a hearty welcome, and introduced me to the teachers already assembled. I looked for a place for my hat and umbrella, and was directed to some pegs that I could only reach by standing on a form, the pegs being placed near the ceiling, a precaution that had been found necessary to insure the safety of such articles.

While engaged in securing my moveables, I was startled by a sound like an explosion of gas, but "It's only a boy throwing a brick at the door," was coolly remarked by my friend, and seeing he was not alarmed, I supposed there was no reason why I should be.

"Will you go and let the girls in?" the superintendent requested of one of the teachers, who immediately obeyed. The house was divided into three floors, the lower for the infants, the centre for the boys, the upper for the girls. These last came trooping in; a disorderly multitude, some clean, some dirty, some fully clothed, many

* The following is a chapter from a book by the Rev. C. J. Whitmore, entitled "Seeking the Lost," published by Nisbet and Co. We have the author's permission to transcribe this chapter to our pages.

with only an outer garment; shoes and stockings were the exception, and there were no bonnets at all. Many of them struggled up with a baby in their arms, a burden to which they were so accustomed, that they would certainly have felt less at ease without than with their living incumbrances. When the last girl had disappeared up the stairs, the superintendent called down, "Now for the boys, please;" and the confusion that instantly arose informed us that he was obeyed.

Whooping and whistling, shrieking and yelling, scrambling and fighting, up they came; a disorderly mob, pushing and crowding, until they reached the turn in the stairs, where they became fixed; presenting only to my bewildered gaze a struggling mass of uncombed and exceedingly dirty heads. The superintendent, however, was equal to the occasion. He seized one of the boys by the hair of his head, and by main force dragged him out of the mass, and thus the pressure was relieved. They were divided into classes as fast as they entered, and as soon as they were all arranged a hymn was given out to be sung.

Such singing! Some were in a high and others in a low key of those who endeavoured to follow the lead of the teachers. Many of them sang the first tune and words that came to mind, forming a mixture of the most grotesque description. Thus some were singing "Hallelujah," others "Nix my Dolly," others "God save the Queen," and still others the words of the hymn, all at one time. This performance concluded, one of the teachers proceeded to pray earnestly, amid the jeers, laughter, loud groans and "Amens" of the scholars generally.

The next process was to appoint teachers to the vacant classes, and I was requested by the superintendent to take one. I pleaded ignorance of the method, but was assured I should do very well if I would try, and was immediately introduced to fifteen boys, who were fast leaving boyhood, among whom was the subject of this sketch, whose name was John Watson, or Nibbling Jack, as his companions called him, from his propensity to appropriate the property of other people without asking their consent.

"Can any of you read?" I inquired, by way of commencing conversation. Not one among the fifteen could do so. "Can't read a letter," replied one; "I've been at work ever since I could stand to it; afore that mother used to make me nurse the babies; she said goin' to school was all humbug."

"If you can't read," I replied, "I will read to you, and you must listen," and I proceeded to look for a fitting lesson. Meanwhile a fight commenced between two of them, and blows were fiercely exchanged.

Thinking it might suit them, I turned to the narrative of feeding the five thousand; but it was received with openly expressed incredulity.

"Vy, old son," remarked one, "yer must think we're fools 'cause we're dirty, but yer can't come that over us: five thousan' on two small fishes and five loaves; tell us vere it come from, out o' the ground, or down from the sky?"

"Do you know how corn grows?" I replied.

"I do," said another, "yer puts seed in the ground, then it comes up like grass, an' grows bigger and bigger until it gets ripe, then there's a stalk with twenty or thirty corns in it."

"Do you think it's harder to make twenty or thirty corns out of one, than to multiply loaves of bread and fishes?" I continued.

"But God makes the corn grow," objected the lad.

"And Jesus was God," I rejoined, "for He was the Son of God, and equal to His and 'our Father' in heaven."

"I vonder how He did it," said another. "I'd a liked to ha' been there to seen it. Hows'ever He must ha' been a good sort to feed all them hungry chaps; perhaps He know'd vot it vas to be hungry Hisself."

"He was so poor, though He was the Son of God," I rejoined, "that He had no place where to lay His head!"

"Vy, that's vus than us," remarked another, "for when we're hardest up, we're allus good for a lump of dry toke and a lodging in the 'Casual' yard, but I suppose He got rich at last, didn't He?"

"I believe that some of the very people He was so kind to murdered Him at last," I said.

"Vot a duffin' lot," contemptuously rejoined the lad.

The whole thing was so new to me at the time that I could not tell whether I was right or wrong in subjecting such narratives to their free criticism, but after-thought has convinced me that if the thousands of these ignorant ones are to be reached at all, they must first be met in their own way. They cannot hurt the Scriptures, and if a spirit of sincere though grotesque inquiry is awakened, it must result in benefit to them.

"Tell us vot comed on Him at the last, old son," asked one.

"He is exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour," I replied.

"Vy, you said jes' now as He vas murdered," remarked the former objector, "how then can He be a Prince?"

"I told you also," I replied, "that He was the Son of God, and He was raised from the dead the third day."

"Gammon," said the lad, and he turned away in evident unbelief.

"I'd like to hear more on it, though," remarked another, "go on and tell it us, old son."

Thus encouraged, I went on cheerfully; and, as earnestly as I could, I "preached unto them Jesus," until the time came for closing

school, which I honestly believe was as much to their regret as my own.

When all was over, and we were departing, the lad I have called Nibbling Jack came up to me, asking, "Vich vay are yer goin' home, old son?"

I indicated that I was going towards Islington, and asked why he was anxious to know.

"I vant to see yer agin," he said; "I'd like to see if yer can do anything for me."

"What do you want done?" I inquired.

"That 'ere's just vot I don't know," he replied; "but I's been on the nibblin' lay a long time, an' I'd like to change it if I could."

"If you will come and see me to-morrow night at my house, I'll see what I can do for you," I replied, giving him minute directions where to find me.

"I'm there like a shot," replied the lad, and so we parted for that time.

During the following day I made various inquiries, with a view to be ready for my expected visitor in the evening; but when the appointed time passed and I saw nothing of him, I began to think I should lose my labour, when it came into my mind that he might be waiting without. I went to see, and he was squatted in the street opposite the house.

"Why didn't you come and ask for me," I inquired.

"Don't know," he replied; "I vos afraid, I think, an' didn't like the looks on it, an' I'm sure the 'copper' didn't like the looks o' me hangin' about here."

I asked him into my sitting-room, and there in the bright light of the fire and the lamp, we stood for a little time earnestly regarding each other.

What he saw I cannot tell, what I saw was,—a boy of about twelve years of age, with his face and head newly washed, clothed in a decent button-up jacket and trousers, but without cap, shirt, stockings, and shoes; a bright intelligent face, and keen dark eyes, which turned quickly and constantly from side to side, with a furtive glance that convinced me his name of Jack the Nibbler was not bestowed in vain.

"Now, John," I said, "sit down, there's a low seat; sit there, and tell me first if you are hungry."

"Not wery, guvnor," he said, "but perhaps yer'll call me Jack. I don't like John, 'cos I've never yeard it ven it vas any good to me."

"What do you mean?" I inquired.

"The only times as ever I'm called John," he rejoined, "is ven

the coppers nabs me, an' I has to go afore 'the beak' the next mornin'; so 'John' allus seems to me to mean a month in quod, and, perhaps, a vippin' arter; so call me Jack, guvnor."

I thought it best to humour him, and therefore repeated, "What have you had to eat to-day, Jack?"

"A lump o' dry toke from the 'Casual' this mornin', guvnor, ain't had nothin' since," he replied.

"How's that, Jack?" I rejoined; "haven't you been able to nibble anything to-day?"

"Haven't tried," he coolly replied; "vanted to come yer to-night, an' vouldn't chance not bein' able through bein' nabbed."

Bread and meat and coffee were brought in, and I cordially invited Jack to make a hearty meal. But with rare self-command, though almost famished, he ate sparingly at first, and it required frequent pressing to induce him to make a hearty meal. When he was fully satisfied, I told him I wanted to know everything about him, and therefore he was to sit in front of the fire and talk away as long as he pleased.

He turned his keen eyes upon me with a look of confidence, that I supposed to be born of my "bread and salt," as he inquired, "What do yer want to know for, guvnor?"

"How can I tell how I can help you, unless I know all about you?" I replied.

"All serene, guvnor," he rejoined; "I'll begin at the fust, and, as fur as I can, I'll tell you all on it."

"Vunce, a long time ago, I 'members I had a father, a mother, an' a home; my ole man vos a porter, he earned sixteen shillin' a-veek, and he had four other kids asides me. He couldn't make a do on it no-how. Vun day he prigged summat and vos sent to quod; ven he comes out, nobody vouldn't have him at no price; so o' course he had to prig agin to live—got cotched agin, an' had to cross the herrin'-pond. The vurkus helped mother, and she tried to feed us by vashin'; out from mornin' till night, day arter day, an' ve five locked up in our kitchen underground. Vun day ve'd hid some matches to play at fireworks vith, ven vun o' my little sisters ketches all a'blaze; ve screams out like mad, some vun busts the door open, but she vus burnt to a cinder, an' the rest on us vere cryin' in a corner. Arter that, mother tries it on at home, but it vorn't no go, an' ve starves. Then, findin' it vouldn't do, she got me vurk at a paper-stainer's, vere they used to lick me 'orrid, vith a thick stick sometimes, sometimes with a thick vire. I've gone home to my mother, guvnor, black an' blue, from my neck to my legs, 'cos my master used to git drunk at vurk an' forgit how much he vopped

me, an' my old 'ooman used to cry like a vater-cart ven she seen me. I stood it as long as I could, guvnor, 'cos I know'd if I didn't I shouldn't have no money to go to the gaff with; my old 'ooman 'ud give me a penny, sometimes tuppence, to git my dinner vith, an' some bread; but, Lor' bless yer, I never had not no dinner; I used to save the money and go to the gaff o' nights. Mother didn't like it, but she couldn't fetch me home from vurk, so I did as I liked."

"What made you like going to see such rubbish, Jack?" I inquired.

"Vy, ve all goes, guvnor," he rejoined; "a cove ain't thought nothin' on as don't go."

"Just tell me what you saw, as near as you can," I continued.

"At the door," he said, "there's a old 'ooman, as fat as a balloon, to collar the 'tin,' vile her old man, as is a reg'lar livin' skilinton vot's bin trainin' fer years to go up thin gaspipes, he keeps order; then the comp'ny sings an' dances the choruses, an' plays in the arter-piece. The arter-piece vos rippin'—they talks in dum' motions. But yer sees a 'ouse on vun side, a pris'n on t'other, an' the young 'ooman as lives in the 'ouse comes out an' pretends to talk to her fancy-man; then her brother comes out vith a long dagger vich he puts into the fancy-man, then he digs a hole and vollups him in. Then he makes the young 'ooman svare she von't tell nobody vot he's bin an' gone an' done. Then they takes up the young 'ooman fer the murder, vich she didn't, an' jist as they're goin' to chop her head off, blue fire lights up, an' the ghost of her young man comes up an' stabs the man as murders him. Then the ghost an' the young 'ooman dances a double hornpipe. Arter that they all dances together, and it's all over."

"And you and your companions liked it, did you, Jack?" I inquired.

"I should think ve did," he rejoined; "I've bin in three times in vun night, an' they often plays as many as six or seven times a-night, every night in the veek, an' it's allus full."

"But when you left paper-staining, what did you do next?" I asked.

"Nibbled anything I could git hold on," was the cool reply.

If this were a solitary instance—if I had selected this boy as a rare thing—then it might scarcely be worth time and space to enter into such minute details, but their "name is legion," they are in every low neighbourhood, and multitudes of them are utterly homeless, wandering on the streets of the giant city. They come and go; they are born; they live; they thieve; they die; and who knows or

cares? Economically they are far more costly to the community in their present condition of neglect than they would be if taken charge of by the State, fed, clothed decently, made to work, and educated to be supports instead of burdens to the commonwealth. It is well known to those who are behind the scenes of dishonest lives, that the habits of thieves are most expensive, that they rarely save anything, and that they have to part with their spoil very far below its real value. Simply to think out these things is to be assured that even great expense, if it resulted in reclamation, would be a large gain on the whole. But this is only the lowest view. If Christ were to come again in the flesh, is it wrong to think that His place and His work would be much among these, where His ministers never go; among these neglected ones, who were *once* visited by a gospel minister who has published the fact as a deed of extraordinary courage and daring? Alas for them! and alas for us also! if we neglect these lost ones for whom He died!

Thoughts like these passed through my mind, as I sat looking down on my visitor, who was basking in the unusual warmth and comfort, quite content with the position he was occupying for the time.

"Well, now, Jack," I resumed at length, "what are you going to do next? and what did you wish to speak to me about?"

"Vy, look yer, guvnor," he replied, "often I'm cold, often I'm hungry, often I've no vere to go on vindy nights, 'cept to snooze in a empty cart; often I gets the strap or a kick from the peeler. I'm never hardly vithout a bruise somevere, vere I bin licked for nibblin', an' vust of all, my old 'ooman von't let me come near her since I bin a prig. Now, I vants to alter all this 'ere, an' to see my mother look pleasant at me. I ain't asking much, guvnor, as you see, but I feels as if I should like her hand on my head, as it use to vas."

"And why do you come to me in your trouble any more than to any one else?" I inquired.

"'Cos I know you'll help a cove if you can," he rejoined.

"How do you know that?" I further inquired.

"Seen it in your eyes," he instantly replied, "ven you vas talking to us yesterday about Him as fed the five thousand; then I thinks this chap really means it as he's tellin' on us, an' I made up my mind to ask you to help me."

"But what do you wish to do?" I questioned.

"I vants to go to vurk, get money, get clo'es, an' ven I'm all right go back to my mother, an' live with her agin," he replied.

"And what will you do to get these things?" I asked.

"Anythin', only gi' me a chance," he answered.

"I will try you," I replied; "kneel down here at once with me, and ask Jesus to help you to 'cease to do evil,' and 'learn to do well.'"

We knelt together, and in earnest simple words I commended the poor wanderer to the Great Shepherd of the sheep, praying that his past might be forgiven, and that his future might be bright with faith and love.

I had obtained a promise of employment for him during the day, and a few subscriptions to help him to begin the world anew; and the next morning all needed garments were given him, and he was installed as an errand boy, at six shillings per week.

Through that week I was not able to see him again, but on the Saturday evening he came to me, offering to repay as much as he could of the money that he supposed I had advanced for him.

"Have you seen your mother yet, Jack?" I inquired.

"Not yet, guvnor," he replied; "vouldn't go home vithout summat to take, an' I havn't had nothin' till now."

"We will go now," I rejoined; "I am sure your mother will be glad to see you."

From Islington to a court near the Ragged School we journeyed pleasantly, Jack narrating the experiences of the week as we went. Among other items he said, "I vos out on a errand yesterday, guvnor, ven who should I meet but vet-headed Dick, an' he ses, 'My eye, Jack, ain't you altered, I shouldn't ha' known yer; vot are yer doin'?' So I tells him, an' he larfs an' ses, 'My eye, vot a stunnin' chance; yer can nail a lot o' things, and we'll go snacks.' So I ses, 'I don't see it; I'm goin' home to my mother, an' if yer don't stop it, I'll tell this yer bobby vot yer bin sayin'.' He looks up, sees the copper, and bolts like vinkin'."

"Well done, Jack," I replied, "keep to that, and you'll do well; but don't forget that you want Jesus to take care of you."

We reached the court where the mother lived, mounted to the top of the house, and found Jack's mother busily engaged in ironing some linen. Jack kept behind me at first, and I proceeded to ask her concerning her lost son. "I don't know where he is," she said, "and my heart often aches for him; he went bad, and I had to tell him not to come here, for the neighbours knew he was bad and wouldn't have trusted me with their things, and we should have been starved. I can do pretty well now; but it would be a great comfort to me if I could only hear some good of my poor lost boy."

She sank into a chair crying bitterly, and covering her face with her thin fingers, through which the rain of tears soon forced its way. Then Jack stepped before her quietly, sank upon his knees, and

reverently laid her hands upon his head, saying only, "Mother! Mother!"

Clean, bright, well dressed, and somewhat grown, she did not know him at first: perhaps her eyes were dim with the tears, for she said, "Is it really my lost John?" But he kept her hands upon his head with his cry of "Mother! Mother!" Then a smile of unutterable love lighted up the pale worn face, and the trembling hands sank with a convulsive clasp round the boy's neck; and I knew and felt that I was repaid a thousand-fold for the little trouble I had taken to help and direct the almost ruined boy.

In one of the narrow busy streets of the city of London stands a large building formerly used as a place of amusement. It is not long since a new lecturer was announced to speak for the first time in that place. When the time for commencing had come there came upon the platform a young man, a young woman, and an elder one, followed by some of the committee. In a low tone, but with striking elegance of diction, the lecture was commenced, and speedily the hearty plaudits of the audience testified their delight. As the lecture progressed, the enthusiasm was delightful to witness, but those who seemed most delighted were the young woman and the old one, who hung upon each sentence with a pleasant fondness I have no words to describe. Many crowded round the lecturer when he had concluded, and he had a pleasant word for each; but I was watching as keenly as I could, and I saw, though the applause was pleasant, yet his great reward would be found in the praises of the two women, for they were the young wife and aged mother of the lecturer, Jack the Nibbler, formerly "a waif" on the great ocean of life in London.

"Some have entertained angels unawares."

THE OGLE MEWS PERSECUTION.

In our last number reference was made to the persevering efforts of the School Board officials to crush the Ogle Mews Ragged Schools. Again and again was the matter brought by summons before the magistrate at Marlborough Street Police Court. Again and again was the subject adjourned, till, as we went to press with our last number, the impression was somewhat general that the subject was to remain in abeyance until Parliament met. Such an arrangement did not seem to satisfy the School Board, who soon resumed their action before the magistrate, with the evident intention to close the schools. On this occasion Sir Robert Carden was present, and said he did not think the Legislature ever intended that children should be

taken from one school and sent to another, and he hoped that some delay would be granted before there was any further investigation into the matter. It was attempted to be shown that some of the children were inefficiently taught, but some of them had only been at the school a very short time. *He could not understand why the School Board should wish to take children away from the Ogle Mews School, as there were plenty of other children—gutter children, who were not looked after at all—for them to look after.* At the Ogle Mews School they had upwards of three hundred children looked after, fed, and clothed, and he could not understand why the School Board should interfere with them. He hoped the matter would be adjourned, so that it might be brought before Parliament, as he believed that the Legislature never intended that there should be any interference with the private means of teaching children.

This appeal did not avail, and Mr. Knox proceeded to discharge his duty, irksome as it was, and out of harmony, as he said, with his usual occupation, yet, nevertheless, a duty, and that is an end of it. He then examined some of the children in open court, and decided that, in his opinion, *the children were not up to the mark of the requirements of the Code, regard being had to their age*, and was about to decide against the school.

Lord Francis Hervey, as a barrister, voluntarily came forward on behalf of the children, and wanted to know where was the law found that fixed the age of the child to a certain standard. The School Board authority failed in giving the required answer, and the magistrate seemed a little puzzled at the unexpected query, and adjourned the further hearing of the case for a week.

A crisis was clearly at hand, and for it all parties were preparing, for when the summonses were again due there was a considerable legal force present.

Mr. Gedge, solicitor to the School Board, appeared on behalf of that Board, and with him was its vice-chairman. Mr. Lejeune attended for the managers of the Ogle Street Ragged Schools, and with him were Lord Francis Hervey, M.P., Sir Robert Carden, and other gentlemen.

Mr. Knox said: Since our last meeting I have to the best of my ability studied the new code of regulations issued by the Education Department for the year 1875; and I think I may now venture to speak with some little confidence upon the subject. I was struck the other day with an objection made by Lord Francis Hervey to the exercise of my jurisdiction on the matter. That objection was that the Education Department had not published a minute, establishing a correspondence between the ages of the children and the standards under which they were to be examined; and as by the Act of Parliament this was to be the main ingredient, as it

seemed to me, on which my judgment was to be based, it followed as a natural consequence that the interference of the magistrate was ousted altogether. This was a very proper and a very reasonable objection—such an one as might fairly be addressed by counsel to a justice, and was well deserving of examination. I come now to the New Code for 1875, which is before me, premising only that the recent Education Acts apply to children from five to thirteen years of age. The reason for this preliminary suggestion will presently appear. I find there, in Article 19, that children above four and under seven years of age are described as infants. They are to be instructed by the principal teacher, "suitably to their age." After seven years of age the standards come into play. Now—although contrary to my first impression, for it was nothing more—when I find it laid down in the minutes that after seven years of age the instruction of children is to be measured by certain standards, but that before they have reached seven years they are to be instructed "suitably to their age," the inference to my mind is irresistible. Are they so instructed? That is the standard I require. After seven years of age I am told by the same section that children are subject to examination. I am then referred to Sections 28 and 29 for the standards. I find Article 28 to consist of six standards, set forth in a tabulated form. We are now discussing the cases of children from seven to thirteen years of age. There are six categories of children and six columns of standards. The conclusion seems obvious that although we have not the six ages—seven, eight, nine, and so forth—actually written under the standards, the intention of the minutes, fairly enough expressed, is that age and standard should correspond. This is all that is required by the Act of Parliament.

Mr. Lejeune, agreeing that there was a strong presumption, argued that that was not enough. There must be an absolute setting forth of correspondence, which was wanting here. Nor could such a thing be inferred, for how would it be in the case of a child above thirteen years of age, where the grant was the object in view? Surely children were not to be put in a worse position for the purposes of examination, and that by mere inference, than directly for the purposes of grant. On the whole he did not think the Education Department had expressed their intention with a sufficient clearness to satisfy the Act of Parliament.

Mr. Gedge argued that the magistrate was not so bound by the terms of the Act, but that he might collect evidence from other sources—as to the general efficiency of the school, for example—which might be had from experts and such like. But matters need not that day be pushed to extremes, as he and his friend Mr. Lejeune had come to an agreement with regard to the Ogle Street Ragged Schools. It was that the managers should accept the 59th article of the new code, the effect of which would be that the teaching power of the schools would be raised, he doubted not, to the requisite degree of efficiency. He was perfectly willing that the matter should be adjourned for two months.

Mr. Knox congratulated the parties on this result, which could

not fail to be satisfactory both to the public and themselves. From the first this was the advice he had ventured to give, namely, that the Board should be considerate and forbearing in dealing with these institutions, and that, on the other hand, the managers of the schools should consent to some little outlay so as to screw up their teaching powers. If they did not do so, despite of all the good work they had done, their existence was a mere question of time.

A somewhat lengthy discussion ensued between Mr. Knox and the learned gentlemen employed in the case. In the course of it

Mr. Knox said he was much dissatisfied with the way in which the case had been brought before him. The points were few but complex, and required to be well discussed.

Mr. Lejeune did not consider it was ever intended by the legislature that a magistrate should examine children in such matters, any more than judges should be called upon to examine persons in the case of a railway accident.

Mr. Knox said that at present he feared the examination of children was inevitable — the terms of the statute were too precise. In any change he hoped the certificate of an expert would be made conclusive as to the capacity of the children, and a similar certificate as to the efficiency of a school. If this were done he could deal with the cases well enough.

Mr. Gedge said he would make an offer. If the Ogle Street school authorities would apply for a certificate as to the efficiency and submit to an inspection he would be satisfied that the matter should stand over for two months.

After some conversation, Mr. Knox said that on the whole this would be a good end to a troublesome matter, and he hoped the same course would be adoped with regard to other Ragged Schools. If zeal were tempered a little with discretion on both sides he doubted not it would be so. The summonses would stand over for six months, which meant practically that they were got rid of altogether if the declared intentions of the parties were carried out.

The summonses were then accordingly adjourned.

On the subject of this decision, the *Standard* says:—

"We doubt, however, whether the initial action of the Board can be justified on the ground either of prudence or necessity. The Ragged Schools were taking in hand a branch of educational work outside the scope of the Board. They did not merely furnish class-room and teachers. Their managers swept the gutter children from the streets, fed and clothed them, humanised them, and taught them habits of decency and cleanliness, adding thereto such moral and educational training as they were capable of receiving. Properly utilised, the Ragged Schools would have furnished nurseries from whence the Board could draft the children into its own schools as soon as they were fitted to receive a higher kind of education. It was a grave mistake to close so many of these schools, and thereby turn adrift thousands of children for whose peculiar wants the Board cannot and

does not provide. We now find, too late, that there was no occasion for this sweeping measure. There can be no objection to the requirement of the Board that each of these schools should employ at least one certificated teacher, and we are confident that if the managers had been apprised of it they would have taken steps to comply with that condition. It would have involved a trifling addition to the outlay of each school, but the supporters of the Ragged School system would certainly not have permitted it to go down for lack of means to provide a superior class of teachers. It was not the condition now enforced which drove the managers to abandon their work and close their schools, but the conviction that the Board was making a dead set at them—that it had power under the Act to shut them up, and that it was bent upon employing that power to the utmost. It is now evident that if the Board had expressed its intentions at the outset, the Ragged Schools might still be pursuing their beneficial work with vigour and success.

"If, as we believe, the terms now offered to the Ogle Street School imply that the Board repents the disastrous action it has directed against the Ragged School system, it is clear that it must exercise more discrimination for the future in enforcing its powers under the Act. We take it for granted that henceforth every Ragged School will be provided with a certificated teacher; but even with this advantage the test of the 'standards' must not be applied too stringently. It would be unreasonable to expect the Ragged School managers to bring up their children to the educational level attained in the Board Schools. The managers have to deal with the lowest, the most ignorant, and the most degraded class of children in the metropolis. They are children whose infancy has been passed in an atmosphere of misery, squalor, and crime. They have lacked the moral training which is furnished in the home life of the children of decent working men, such as constitute the mass of the pupils in Board Schools. They must start in the Ragged School with the alphabet of moral and educational training. Is it fair to expect that, with their darkened intelligence and unawakened faculties, they can stand any chance in a competitive examination with the children in the Board Schools? Yet this is the test by which the Ragged Schools have hitherto been tried and condemned. No one asks that they shall be exempt from any test whatever, but it is not too much to say that it should be defined with a careful and even generous consideration for the enormous disadvantages under which they strive to comply with the educational requirements exacted from them. It is to the credit of the Board that it has advanced a step in this direction, and we trust that it will conduct its future relations with the Ragged Schools in the same spirit."

OUR MISCELLANY.

In the Quarterly Record for January, an announcement was made of the intention to publish quarterly some of the leading features of the institutions in connection with the Society. In furtherance of such object short notices of work done, alterations made, and good accomplished, were solicited from teachers or superintendents.

Formal reports, or even long letters, are not desired; but brief statements or tabulated forms, or anything, however short, as an indication of change or progress, will be welcome. Such brief memorials may in time constitute a bulk of valuable information.

Exeter Buildings and *King Edward Street* have both industrial exhibitions of their scholars' handiwork.

Gray's Yard, Oxford Street, has a busy time of it on the Lord's day, as witness the following operations. Girls' and Boys' School, Ragged Church, Bible Reading, Children's Church, Ragged Church Service, Ragged Church, Bible Class and Prayer Meeting; Girls', Boys', and Infant School in the afternoon and evening. Breakfast also to Casual Ward men and women and others of the wretchedly poor, besides Bible Classes for big and rough boys and girls. Since Christmas the Sunday evening attendance has reached 334, and the afternoon attendance 241. The winter averages are high, but the yearly averages are here, and in many other schools, unduly pulled down by the thin attendance occurring during bright summer weather. As a consesequence, many institutions are not fairly credited with the amount of work done. Nor in this case is the amount of work done on Sunday an apology for doing nothing in the week. Every day glitters with golden works; thus there are three operations on Monday, one on Tuesday, two on Wednesday, two on Thursday, and two on Friday.

Stephen the Yeoman, Marigold Place, Bermondsey, is an example of a Ragged School preserving all its operations intact. Its Day School has not succumbed to the School Board, neither is it living on sufferance, and doling out a poor intellectual pittance to those mentally starving, for it has for two or more years passed successfully an examination by one of her Majesty's Inspectors. The teacher has moreover received an honorary certificate. Its daily Bible teaching is not cant nor merely mechanical religious statement, but true spiritual work by spiritual-minded persons. The Sunday has its three schools, morning, afternoon, and evening; and during the week there are a Mothers' Meeting, Band of Hope, Savings Bank, and Clothing Club.

Vincent Street.—The master of this Night School is kindly and faithfully aided by voluntary teachers. There is no stint of time; to those able and willing to wait, an extra half-hour is frequently given. A lantern, &c., costing eleven pounds, has recently been pur-

chased for the purpose of aiding the superintendents in their work of instructing and amusing the children and their parents. One night a week during the winter has been set apart for this special work.

Hamilton Place, King's Cross Road, requires and deserves larger space for its operations. The superintendent and teachers, by the fusion of love, act as one, so that children are attracted in such large numbers that the place overflows.

Little Camden Street Sunday-evening School, much to the encouragement of its old friends, has received an accession to its staff of teachers, which has enabled them to open the doors to a number of big boys and girls who have been long clamouring for admission. On Friday nights a good number of big lads, under the care of one of the superintendents, have assembled for secular instruction. The experiment in a limited form has been such a success, that it is hoped next autumn that the work will commence on a broader scale.

Fox Court is of some thirty years' standing. Measuring its life by some showy but ephemeral institutions, it may be said that its grey hairs are a crown of glory to it. Like a fine ancestral tree it rears its head in majesty, the shocks of time leaving it unscathed. It has twenty or more operations; one of these, the visiting and relief operation, has been the means of supplying timely aid to many poor families. Ten visitors have made eight hundred visits, mostly in the winter, when tickets for coal, meat, and groceries have been distributed, not on application, or mere hearsay reports, but on personal visitation.

Clerkenwell Close has had as many as 130 attending its Night School, which is held on three evenings weekly. Here is not a solitary master with an imperfectly lighted and fireless room, but everything wears the air of welcome, and cheerfulness and occupation greet the eye of the visitor.

Old Castle Street.—This operation, under the superintendence of an able man, is a resuscitated work. The Sunday Schools and Services are carried on with great enthusiasm by a large and energetic staff of teachers. The united attendance on Sunday afternoon and evening is between 800 and 900. Week-night Schools have been opened on three evenings.

Hammond Square carries on a good Christian work. Its Sunday-night School is somewhat contracted for want of space. The upper room is occupied by a Mission Service to adults, which is well attended and well conducted. This state of things says "Enlarge your borders." The large building contiguous, and unoccupied, might have some of its space utilised for one of these operations. Hoxton swarms on Sunday night with a class sadly wanting the oversight which this old and now well-related institution can supply.

Tottenham Square, Kingsland, Gospel Mission, besides its Sunday and Week-night Schools, has a branch operation in Shaklewell. The attractive force of love operates as an irresistible charm, it being a pleasing feature of this work that the friends have not to look up or seek for children, "they crowd as doves to their windows." The attendance at the Week-night Schools has reached 90.

Lamb and Flag.—Since the discontinuance of the Day Schools, the Infant Nursery has been extended; part of the school premises is used for this purpose. An Office for Servants has also been opened at the building in Red Lion Street. Such an institution may be a means of providing serious-minded girls with spiritual homes.

Union Walk and Fleming Street, Hoxton.—This old operation, which was unfortunately suspended some time since, is likely to revive in a Board School building, under the conduct of the same friends who worked so many years at Union Walk.

Amicable Row, Mansfield Street, Jurston Street, and *Hanover Street,* are four noble Sunday-night operations. The spiritual needs of the localities are richly responded to by such efforts.

Brackley Street has had a very large increase to its Sunday-afternoon School. It has two large Bible Classes, and good singing is made an important feature of the work.

Chequer Alley shows well with its Sunday Schools, morning, afternoon, and evening, Sunday Services, Open-air Services, Tract Visiting Society, Prayer Meetings, Week-night Preaching, Bible-women, Lending Libraries, Winter-evening Lectures—these are first-class and systematically held—Band of Hope, Penny Savings Bank, Sewing Classes, Mothers' Meetings, Children's Dinners, Working Men's Club, Crêche, Clothing Society, Costers' Loan Fund, and Week-night Schools. Here is gospel panoply, here is an armoury of light!

George Yard and *Lamb and Flag* have Flower Missions. Small bouquets of flowers, enriched with appropriate texts, are distributed through the children to the homes of the poor—

> "Flowers that come before the swallows dare,
> And take the winds of March with beauty,"

are often angels of gladness and comfort to the wretched. "For He that careth for the flowers will much more care for them."

Price's Street holds a monthly entertainment on a Saturday night, consisting of readings, recitations, solo and part singing, which is well attended.

Ernest Street, notwithstanding the closing of its Day School, still continues its Weekly Dinners; so do other institutions. To feed the hungry, and clothe the naked, to look after the lost, still lie as a duty at the Ragged School doors.

Ragged School Union.

Meetings of the Committee were held on—

January 10th and 14th,
February 7th and 11th,
March 6th and 10th.

Finances:—		£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
Jan.	Contributions received	337	9	6	; grants voted,	268	5	10
	Other receipts . . .	69	7	3				
Feb.	Contributions . . .	335	17	8	; grants . .	388	16	5
	Legacies	104	18	0				
	Other receipts . . .	123	14	3				
Mar.	Contributions . . .	172	1	7	; grants . .	140	13	6
	Legacy	15	0	0				
	Other receipts . . .	21	4	0				

During the three months applications were received from schools in Wentworth Street, Salamanca, Clements Lane, Whitechapel, Stoke Newington, Glo'ster Square, Clerkenwell Close, Field Lane, Shadwell, London Street, New Inn Street, Motley Street, Townsend Street, York Mews, Waterloo Road, Snowsfields, Lansdown Place, Brunswick Street, Tottenham Square, Hamilton Place, Deptford, Cranbrook Street, New Tothill Street, Dove Row, Bell Alley, Parker Street, Old Castle Street, Menotti Street, Coleman Street, Buross Street, Lower Park Road, Somers Town, Webber Row, Pell Street, Holloway, Spicer Street, Northey Street, Ernest Street, Bacon Street, Lamb and Flag, Hoxton, Canning Town, King's Cross, Bethnal Green, Clerkenwell, Stratford, Hackney Road, and Bermondsey.

Grants in aid, after due resolution and report, have been voted to many of the foregoing, and the remainder are under consideration to be dealt with at subsequent meetings. Arrangements were made for holding the Thirty-second Anniversary of the Society in Exeter Hall, on Monday, May 8, on which occasion at least 500 boys and girls will be present to receive their prizes at the hands of Lord Shaftesbury, for faithful service in situations held without change for more than twelve months. These young people will sing on the occasion a selection of pieces under the conduct of Mr. Proudman.

Notices of Meetings.

NATIONAL PENNY BANK.

On Tuesday, March 1, a meeting was called at the Eastern Hall, East India Dock Road, for the purpose of furthering the scheme of opening Penny Banks in various parts of London. The chair was taken by the Right Hon. the Earl of Shaftesbury, K.G., who was accompanied

on the platform by Major-General Eardley Wilmot, R.A., &c.

The proceedings were opened by Mr. Barsley, the manager, giving a short account of the Bank since its institution. It had now been established some short time as a limited liability company, with a capital of £10,000, and since then there had been opened nine branches for receiving money in the evening, and seven or eight others open all day. Their principle was only to pay the interest they could afford—viz., 3 per cent., and that they were enabled to do, as the interest they received was slightly in excess of that. By a system they had adopted they could sell the one-hundred-and-twentieth part of a £100 consol, and thus give every one a share in the National Debt. They hoped to carry these Banks into every school and workshop throughout the kingdom, and make it as easy for a man to save as it was to spend.

Major-General Eardley Wilmot, R.A., moved a resolution to the effect that it was desirable to extend the facilities for the exercise of thrift, and advocated that every one, no matter in what station, should endeavour to save something.

This was seconded by Mr. Walker, and carried unanimously.

The next resolution was proposed by Mr. Hamilton Hoare, and was that the scheme of the National Penny Bank met a want long felt, and deserved the support of the meeting.

General Wilmot seconded the motion, which was carried.

The Earl of Shaftesbury said he could not leave without expressing his great satisfaction at the progress the National Penny Bank was making. It was conducted on the very best principles to encourage thrift, on which subject he would say a few words. He would like to see the spirit of economy and saving that permeated the French working classes transplanted to England, which would make our working men the most comfortable and affluent on the face of the earth. The war indemnity of France was almost paid entirely out of the savings of the French people, but if such a call was made on England it could not be met in a similar manner. A few years back sixty Ragged Schools combined for the purpose of establishing a savings bank, and in one year the deposits amounted to £2,000. This was all the savings of children, and in the time of the famine at Bethnal Green was the salvation of many a poor family. In the shoeblack brigades there were savings banks, and many of the boys were enabled to do a great deal of good to their families. At the time of the cotton famine the Red Brigade gave five per cent. of their earnings to the Lancashire fund. He hoped to see thrift commence with children's earliest years. There was nothing better than thrift, because it enabled men not only to do good, but to stand against temptation. If they only began to save they would soon find how easy it was to go on, and experience in the truest sense the meaning of the old adage as to "the power of pence."

The meeting, which was of a hearty character, concluded with a vote of thanks to the chairman.

KENTISH TOWN.

On Tuesday, Feb. 8, 1876, through the liberality of H. B. Spalding, Esq., the annual tea meeting was

given to the old scholars, married and unmarried, 140 of whom were present, all seeming to be doing well in the world. After the substantial tea so kindly provided, H. B. Spalding, Esq., took the chair, being supported by Mr. Gill, Mr. Turpin, of the Open-air Mission, Mr. Curtis, of the Ragged School Union, Messrs. G. and S. James, all of whom addressed the meeting in suitable and impressive terms. A number of Sankey's hymns varied the proceedings most agreeably, Mr. Crane, one of the old teachers, conducting and presiding at the harmonium. The school still continues its operations, by two services on Sunday and Night School four nights each week, Monday and Thursday for girls, and Wednesday and Friday for boys, all of whom are taught gratuitously by kind and devoted teachers under the superintendence of Mr. George James, who also conducts the Sunday Services. There is a Home for Boys attached to the schools, where six boys are housed and kept, and Mr. George James intimated his wish to enlarge the Home at a cost of about £600, so as to accommodate more destitute boys, and made an appeal to the meeting to help him, who readily subscribed to the object. Mr. Bacon, of Chalk Farm Road, an old teacher, wrote to say he would be glad to give £5 towards such a fund. It was stated that the Home had been a means of much good in restoring boys to their mothers, after having become estranged from them by vicious habits and bad conduct. Forty-six boys and 60 girls attended the Night Schools.

HOMERTON RAGGED SCHOOL AND GOSPEL MISSION.

The Annual Meeting of the above mission was held in the School-room, John Street, Homerton, on Feb. 23rd. The chair was taken by F. A. Bevan, Esq. The report stated that there was much cause for thankfulness to God for spiritual blessings received, for increasing numbers attending the school, and because the debt had been cleared off. Revs. W. Baker, of Rams Chapel, and S. Hebditch, of Clapton Park; Messrs. H. R. Williams, J. Holland, and other friends, addressed the meeting.

Assistance was asked to pay for the services of a visitor, to purchase a library, and to provide further extension, the present rooms not being sufficient to accommodate the many children about the streets on Sunday evening. It was further stated that a room had been opened for young men "roughs," some of whom had formerly attended the school but had left; for this effort special assistance was asked. We are happy to state that Mr. F. A. Bevan has become the Treasurer of the Mission, and we trust that friends will be led to supply the needs of the work.